

*Thankfulness for Mercies received a necessary
Duty.*

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Farewel SERMON

Preached on Board the

W H I T A K E R,

At Anchor near

S A V A N N A H in *G E O R G I A,*

On *S U N D A Y* May the 17th, 1738.

B Y

G E O R G E W H I T E F I E L D, A. B.
of *Pembroke College, OXFORD.*



L O N D O N:

Printed for *C. W H I T E F I E L D,* in the Year
M D C C X X X I X.

Thankings for Manuscript received a necessary
Duty

A

BARCOWEL SERMON

Preached on Board the

W H I T A K E R

At Anchor near

SAVANNAH in GEORGIA

On Sunday 17th 1738.



BY

GEORGE WHITEFIELD, A. B.
of Pembroke College Oxford.



L O N D O N :

Printed for C. Whittell, in the Year
MDCCLXXXIX.

PSALM CVII. 30, 31.

*Then are they glad, because they are at Rest,
and so he bringeth them unto the Haven where
they would be.*

*O that Men would therefore praise the Lord
for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that
he doeth for the Children of Men!*

Numberless Marks does Man bear in his Soul, that he is fallen and estranged from God ; but no one gives a greater Proof of it, than that Backwardness, which every one finds within himself, to the Duty of Praise and Thanksgiving.

When God placed the first Man in Paradise, his Soul no doubt was so filled with a Sense of the Riches of the divine Love, that he was continually employing that *Breath of Life* the Almighty had not long before breathed into him, in blessing and magnifying that all-bountiful, all-gracious God, in whom he lived, moved, and had his Being.

And the brightest Idea we can form of the Angelical Hierachy above, and the Spirits of just Men made perfect, is, that they are continually standing round the Throne of God,

and cease not Day and Night, saying, *Worthy art thou, O Lamb, that wast slain, to receive Power and Riches, and Wisdom, and Strength, and Honour, and Glory and Blessing,* Rev. v. 12.

That then which was Man's Perfection when Time first began, and will be his Employment when Death is swallowed up in Victory, and Time shall be no more, without Controversy, is part of our Perfection, and ought to be our frequent Exercise on Earth: And I doubt not but those blessed Spirits, who are sent forth to minister to them who shall be Heirs of Salvation, often stand astonished when they encamp around us, to find our Hearts so rarely enlarged, and our Mouths so seldom opened, to shew forth the loving Kindness of the Lord, or to speak of all his Praise.

Matter for Praise and Adoration can never be wanting to Creatures redeemed by the Blood of the Son of God; and who have such continual Scenes of his infinite Goodness presented to their View, that were their Souls duly affected with a Sense of his universal Love, they could not but be continually calling on Heaven and Earth, Men and Angels to join with them in praising and blessing that *high and lofty one, who inhabiteth Eternity, who maketh his Sun to shine on the Evil and on the Good,* and daily pours down his Blessings on the whole Race of Mankind.

But

But few are arrived to such a Degree of Charity, as to rejoice with those that do rejoice, and to be as thankful for others Mercies as their own. This Part of Christian Perfection, though begun on Earth, will be consummated only in Heaven; where our Hearts will glow with such fervent Love towards God and one another, that every fresh Degree of Glory communicated to our Neighbour, will also communicate to us a fresh Degree of Thankfulness and Joy.

That which has a greater Tendency to excite the Generality of us fallen Men to Praise and Thanksgiving, is a Sense of God's private Mercies, and particular Benefits bestowed upon ourselves. For as these come nearer our own Hearts, so they must be more affecting; and as they are peculiar Proofs, whereby we may know that God does, in a more especial Manner, favour us above others, so they cannot but sensibly touch us; and if our Hearts are not quite frozen, like Coals of a Refiner's Fire, must melt us down into Thankfulness and Love. It was a Consideration of the distinguishing Favours God had shewn to his chosen People *Israel*, and the frequent and remarkable Deliverances wrought by him in behalf of *those who go down to the Sea in Ships, and occupy their Business in great Waters*, that made the Holy Psalmist break out so frequently as he does in this Psalm, into this moving,

pathetical Exclamation, *Oh that Men would therefore praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders that he doeth for the Children of Men!*

His expressing himself in so passionate, fervent a Manner, implies both the Importance and Neglect of the Duty. As when *Moses* on another Occasion cries out, *Oh that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would practically consider their latter End!* Deut. xxxii. 29.

I say, Importance and Neglect of the Duty; for out of those many Thousands that receive Blessings from the Lord, how few give Thanks in Remembrance of his Holiness? The Account given us of the ungrateful Lepers, is but too lively a Representation of the Ingratitude of Mankind in general; who like them perhaps, when under any humbling Providence, can cry, *Jesus Master, have Mercy on us*, Luke xvii. 13. but when healed of their Sickness, or delivered from their Distress, scarce one in Ten can be *found returning to give Thanks to God.*

And yet as common as this Sin of Ingratitude is, there is nothing we ought more earnestly to pray against. For what is more absolutely condemned in holy Scripture than Ingratitude? Or what more peremptorily required than the contrary Temper? Thus says the Apostle, *Rejoyce evermore, in every thing give Thanks*, 1 Thes. v. 16, 18. *Be careful for*

for nothing : But in every Thing by Prayer and Supplication, with Thanksgiving, let your Requests be made known unto God, Phil. iv. 6.

On the contrary, the Apostle mentions it as one of the highest Crimes of the Gentiles, that they were not thankful. *Neither were they thankful*, says he, *Rom. i. 21.* as also in another Place, he numbers the Unthankful, *2 Tim. iii. 2.* amongst those unholy, prophane Persons, who are to have their Portion in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

As for our Sins, God puts them behind his Back ; but his Mercies he will have acknowledged, *There is Virtue gone out of me*, says Jesus Christ, *Luke viii. 46.* And the Woman who was cured of her bloody Issue, must confess it. And we generally find, when God sent any remarkable Punishment upon any particular Person, he reminded him of the Favours he had received, as so many Aggravations of his Ingratitude. Thus when God was about to visit *Eli's* House, he thus expostulates with him by his Prophet, *Did I plainly appear unto the House of thy Fathers, when they were in Egypt, in Pharaoh's House ? And did I chuse him out of all the Tribes of Israel, to be my Priest, to offer upon mine Altar, to burn Incense, and to wear an Ephod before me ? Wherefore kick ye at my Sacrifice, and at mine Offering, which I have commanded in my Habitation, and honourest thy Sons*

above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the Offerings of Israel my People? Wherefore the Lord God of Israel saith, I said indeed, that thy House, and the House of thy Father should walk before me for ever, but now the Lord saith, Be it far from me, for them that honour me will I honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 1 Sam. ii. 27, 28, 29, 30.

It was this and such like Instances of God's Severity against the Unthankful, that inclined me to chuse the Words of the Text, as the most proper Subject I could discourse on at this Time.

For these four Months, my good Friends, we have now been upon the Sea in this Ship, and have occupied our Business in the great Waters. At God Almighty's Word, we have seen the stormy Wind arise, which hath lifted up the Waves thereof. We have been carried up to the Heaven, and down again to the Deep, and some of our Souls melted away because of the Trouble; but I trust we cried earnestly unto the Lord, and he delivered us out of our Distress. For he made the Storm to cease; so that the Waves thereof were still. And now we are glad, because we are at rest, for God hath brought us to the Haven where we would be. Oh that you would therefore praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders

ders that he hath done for us, the unworthiest of the Sons of Men.

Thus *Moses*, thus *Joshua* behaved. For when they were about to take their Leaves of the Children of *Israel*, they recounted to them what great Things God had done for them, as the best Arguments and Motives, they could urge to engage them to Obedience. And how can I copy after better Examples? What fitter, what more noble Motives, to Holiness and Purity of living, can I lay before you than they did?

Indeed, I cannot say, that we have seen a *Pillar of a Cloud by Day*, or a *Pillar of Fire by Night*, going visibly before us to guide our Course; but this I can say, that the same God who was in that Pillar of a Cloud, and Pillar of Fire, which departed not from the *Israelites*, and who has made the Sun to rule the Day, and the Moon to rule the Night, has, by his good Providence, directed us in our right Way, or else the Pilot had steered us in vain.

Neither can I say, That we have seen the *Sun stand still*, as the Children of *Israel* did in the Days of *Joshua*. But surely God, during Part of our Voyage, has caused it to withhold some of that Heat, which it usually sends forth in these warmer Climates, or else it had not failed, but some of you must have

perish'd in the Sickness that has been, and does yet continue, among us.

We have not seen the Waters stand purposely on an Heap, that we might pass thro', neither have we been pursued by *Pharaoh* and his Host, and delivered out of their Hands; but we have been led through the Sea as thro' a Wilderness, and were once remarkably preserved from being run down by another Ship; which had God permitted, the Waters, in all Probability, would immediately have overwhelmed us, and like *Pharaoh* and his Host, we should have sunk, as Stones, into the Sea.

We may, indeed, Atheist like, ascribe all these Things to natural Causes, and say, Our own Skill and Foresight has brought us hither in Safety. But as certainly as Jesus Christ, that Angel of the Covenant, in the Days of his Flesh walked upon the Water, and said to his sinking Disciples, *Be not afraid, it is I* so surely has the same everlasting *I am, who decketh himself with Light as with a Garment, who spreadeth out the Heavens like a Curtain, who claspeth the Winds in his Fist, who holdeth the Waters in the Hollow of his Hands, and guided the wise Men by a Star in the East; so surely, I say, has he spoken, and at his Command the Winds have blown us where we are now arrived. For his Providence ruleth all Things, Wind and Storms obey his Word;*

Word; he saith to it at one Time go, and it goeth; at another, come, and it cometh, and at a third Time blow this Way, and it bloweth.

It is he, my Brethren, and not we ourselves, that has of late sent us such prosperous Gales, and made us ride, as it were, on the Wings of the Wind, into the Haven where we would be.

Ob that you would, therefore, praise the Lord for his Goodness, and by your Lives declare, that you are truly thankful for the Wonders he had shewn to us, who are less than the least of the Sons of Men.

I say, declare it by your Lives. For to give him Thanks, barely with your Lips, while your Hearts are far from him, is but a mock Sacrifice, nay, an Abomination unto the Lord.

This was the End, the Royal Psalmist says, God had in View, when he shewed such Wonders, from Time to Time to the People of *Israel, that they might keep his Statutes and observe his Laws*, Psal. cv. 44. and this, my good Friends, is the End God would have accomplished in us, and the only Return he desires us to make him, for all the Benefits he hath conferred upon us.

O then, let me beseech you, give God your Hearts, your whole Hearts; and suffer yourselves

selves to be drawn by the Cords of infinite Love, to honour and obey him.

Affure yourselves you can never serve a better Master ; for his Service is perfect Freedom, his Yoak, when worn a little while, exceeding easy, his Burden light ; and in keeping his Commandments there is great Reward ; Love, Peace, Joy in the Holy Ghost here, and a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away hereafter.

You may, indeed, let other Lords have Dominion over you, and Satan may promise to give you all the Kingdoms of the World, and the Glory of them, if you will fall down and worship him ; but he is a Liar, and was so from the Beginning ; and has not so much to give you, as you may tread on with the Sole of your Foot ; or could he give you the whole World, yet, that could not make you happy without God. It is God alone, my Brethren, whose we are, in whose Name I now speak, and who has of late shewed us such Mercies in the Deep, that can give solid lasting Happiness to your Souls ; and he for this Reason only desires your Hearts, because without him they must be miserable.

Suffer me not then to go away without my Errand ; as it is the last Time I shall speak to you, let me not speak in vain ; but let a Sense of the divine Goodness lead you to Repentance.

Even

Even *Saul*, that abandoned Wretch, when *David* shewed him his Skirt, which he had cut off, when he might have taken his Life, was so melted down with his Kindness, that he lifted up his Voice and wept. And we must have Hearts harder than *Saul's*, nay, harder than the nether Milstone, if a Sense of God's late loving Kindnesses, notwithstanding he might so often have destroyed us, does not even compel us to lay down our Arms against him, and become his faithful Servants and Soldiers unto our Lives End.

If they have not this Effect upon us, we shall, of all Men, be most miserable; for God is just, as well as merciful; and the more Blessings we have received here, the greater Damnation, if we do not improve them, shall we incur hereafter.

But God forbid that any of those should ever suffer the Vengeance of eternal Fire, amongst whom, I have, for these four Months, been preaching the Gospel of Christ, but yet thus must it be, if you do not improve the divine Mercies; and instead of your being my Crown of Rejoycing in the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ, I must appear as a swift Witness against you.

But, Brethren, I am persuaded better Things of you, and Things that accompany Salvation, though I thus speak.

Blessed

Blessed be God, some Marks of a partial Reformation at least, have been visible amongst all you that are Soldiers. And my weak, though sincere Endeavours, to build you up in the Knowledge and Fear of God, have not been altogether in vain in the Lord.

Swearing, I hope, is, in a great Measure, abated with you ; and God, I trust, has blessed his late Visitations by making them the Means of awakening your Consciences, to a more solicitous Enquiry about the Things which belong to your everlasting Peace.

Fulfil you then my Joy, by continuing thus minded, and labour to go on to Perfection. For I shall have no greater Pleasure than to see, or hear, that you walk in the Truth.

Consider, my good Friends, you are now, as it were, entring on a new World, where you will be surrounded with Multitudes of Heathens ; and if you take not Heed to *have your Conversation honest amongst them, and to walk worthy the holy Vocation wherewith you are called*, you will act the hellish Part of *Herod's* Soldiers over again ; and cause Christ's Religion, as they did his Person, to be had in Derision of those that are round about you.

Consider further, what peculiar Privileges you have enjoyed, above many others that are entring on the same Land. They have had, as it were, a Famine of the Word, but you have rather been in Danger of being surfeited

feited with your spiritual Manna. And, therefore, as more Instructions have been given you, so from you, Men will most justly expect the greater Improvement in Goodness.

Indeed, I cannot say, I have discharged my Duty towards you as I ought. No, I am sensible of many Faults, which I have been guilty of in my Ministerial Office, and for which I have not failed, nor, I hope, ever shall fail, to humble myself in Secret before God. However, this I can say, that except a few Days that have been spent necessarily on other Persons, whom God immediately called me to write and minister unto, and the two last Weeks wherein I have been confined by Sickness; all the while I have been Aboard, I have been either actually engaged in, or preparing myself for instructing you. And though you are now to be committed to the Care of another (whose Labours I heartily beseech God to bless amongst you) yet I trust I shall, at all Seasons, if need be, willingly spend, and be spent, for the Good of your Souls, though the more abundantly I love you the less I should be loved.

As for your military Affairs, I have nothing to do with them. Fear God, and you must honour the King. Nor am I better acquainted with the Nature of that Land which you are now come over to protect; only this I may venture to affirm in
the

the general, that you must necessarily expect upon your Arrival at a new Colony, to meet with many Difficulties. But your very Profession teaches you to endure Hardship; be not, therefore, fainted-hearted, but quit yourselves like Men, and be strong, *Numb. xiv.* Be not like those cowardly Persons, who were affrighted at the Report of the false Spies, that came and said, that there were People tall as the *Anakins* to be grappled with, but be ye like unto *Caleb* and *Joshua*, all Heart; and say, we will act valiantly, for we shall be more than Conquerors over all Difficulties through Jesus Christ that loved us.—Above all Things, my Brethren, take Heed and beware of murmuring, like the perverse *Israelites*, against those that are set over you; and *learn whatsoever State you shall be in, therewith to be content*, *Phil. iv. 11.*

As I have spoken to you, I hope your Wives also will suffer the Word of Exhortation.

Your Behaviour on Shipboard, especially the first Part of the Voyage, I chuse to throw a Cloak over; for to use the mildest Terms, it was not such as *became the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*. However, of late, blessed be God, you have taken more Heed to your Ways, and some of you have walked all the while, as became *Women professing Godliness*. Let those accept my hearty Thanks, and permit

mit me to intreat you all in general, as you are all now married, to remember the solemn Vow you made at your Entrance into the Marriage State, and see that you be *subject to your own Husbands, in every lawful Thing*: Beg of God *to keep the Door of your Lips, that you offend not with your Tongues*; and *walk in Love*, that your Prayers be not *bindered*. You that have Children, let it be your chief Concern to *breed them up in the Nurture and Monition of the Lord*. And live all of you so holy and unblameable, that you may not so much as be suspected to be unchaste; and as some of you have imitated *Mary Magdalen* in her Sin, strive to imitate her also in her Repentance.

As for you that are Sailors, what shall I say? How shall I address myself to you? How shall I do that which I so much long to do---touch your Hearts? Gratitude obliges me to wish thus well to you. For you have often taught me many instructive Lessons, and reminded me to put up many Prayers to God for you, that you might receive your spiritual Sight.

When I have seen you preparing for a Storm, and reefing your Sails to guard against it, how have I wished that you and I were both as careful to avoid that Storm of God's Wrath, which will certainly, without Repentance, quickly overtake us? When I have observed

served you catch at every fair Gale, how have I secretly cried, Oh that we were as careful to know the Things that belong to our Peace, before they are hid from our Eyes! And when I have taken Notice how steadily you eyed your Compass in order to steer aright, how have I wished, that we as steadily eyed the Word of God, which alone can preserve us from *making Shipwreck of Faith, and a good Conscience?* In short, there's scarce any Thing you do, which has not been a Lesson of Instruction to me; and, therefore, it would be ungrateful in me, did I not take this Opportunity of exhorting you in the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to be as wise in the Things which concern your Soul, as I have observed you to be in the Affairs belonging to your Ship.

I am sensible that the Sea is reckoned but an ill School to learn Christ in: And to see a devout Sailor is esteemed as uncommon a Thing, as to see a *Saul* amongst the Prophets. But whence this wondering? Whence this looking upon a godly Sailor as a Man to be wondered at, as a speckled Bird upon the Earth? I am sure for the little Time I have come in and out amongst you, and as far as I can judge from the little Experience I have had of Things, I scarce know any way of Life, that is capable of greater Improvements than yours.

The

The continual Danger you are in of being overwhelmed by the great Waters; the many Opportunities you have of beholding God's Wonders in the Deep; the happy Retirement you enjoy from worldly Temptations; and the daily Occasions that are offered you, to endure Hardships, are such noble Means of promoting the spiritual Life, that were your Hearts bent towards God, you would account it your Happiness, that his Providence has called you, to go down to the Sea in Ships, and to occupy your Business in the great Waters.

The Royal Psalmist knew this, and, therefore, in the Words of the Text, calls more especially on Men of your Employ, to *praise the Lord for his Goodness, and declare the Wonders he doth for the Children of Men.*

And oh that you would be wise in Time, and hearken to his Voice to Day, *whilst it is called to Day!* For ye yourselves know how little is to be done on a sick Bed: And how God has, in an especial Manner, of late, invited you to Repentance. Two of your Crew he has taken off by Death, and most of you he has mercifully visited with a grievous Sickness. The Terrors of the Lord have been upon you, and when burnt with a scorching Fever, some of you have cried out, *What shall we do to be saved?* Remember then the Resolutions you made, when you thought

God was about to take away your Souls. And see that according to your Promises, you shew forth your Thankfulness not only with your Lips but in your Lives. For though God may bear long, he will not forbear always; and if these signal Mercies and Judgments do not lead you to Repentance, assure yourselves there will at last come a fiery Tempest, from the Presence of the Lord, which will sweep away you, and all other Adversaries of God.

I am positive neither you nor the Soldiers have wanted, nor will want any Manner of Encouragement to Piety and Holiness of living from those two Persons who have here the Government over you; for they have been such Helps to me in my Ministry, and have so readily concurred in every Thing for your Good, that they may justly demand a publick Acknowledgment of Thanks both from you and me.

Permit me then, my honoured Friends, in the Name of both your People, to return you hearty Thanks for the Care and Tenderneſs you have expreſſed for the Welfare of their better Parts.

As for the private Favours you have shewn my Person, I hope so deep a Sense of them is imprinted on my Heart, that I shall plead them before God in Prayer, as long as I live.

But

But I have still stronger Obligations to intercede in your Behalf. For God, for ever adored be his free Grace in Christ Jesus, has set his Seal to my Ministry in your Hearts. Some distant Pangs of the New-Birth I have observed to come upon you; and God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, by ceasing to pray, that the good Work begun in your Souls, may be carried on till the Day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Time of our Departure from each other is now at Hand, and you are going out into a World of Temptations. But though absent in Body let us be present with each other in Spirit, and God, I trust, will enable you to be singularly good, to be ready to be accounted Fools for Christ's Sake; and then we shall meet never to part again in the Kingdom of our Father, which is in Heaven.

To you my Companions and familiar Friends, who came over with me to sojourn in a strange Land, do I in the next Place address myself. For you I especially fear, as well as for myself; because as we take sweet Counsel together oftner than others, and as you are let into a more intimate Friendship with me in private Life, the Eyes of all Men will be upon you to note even the minutest Miscarriage---and, therefore, it highly concerns you to *walk circumspectly* towards those that are without,---I hope nothing but a sin-

gle Eye to God's Glory and the Salvation of your own Souls, brought you from your native Country. Remember then the End of your coming hither, and you can never do amiss--Be Patterns of Industry, as well as Piety, to those who shall be around you; and above all Things let us have such fervent Charity amongst ourselves, that it may be said of us, as of the Primitive Christians, *See how the Christians love one another.*

And now I have been speaking to others particularly, I have one general Request to make to all, and that with Reference to myself.

You have heard, my dear Friends, how I have been exhorting every one of you to shew forth your Thankfulness for the divine Goodness, not only with your Lips, but in your Lives: But *Physician heal thyself*, may justly be retorted on me. For (without any false Pretences to Humility) I find my own Heart so little inclined to this Duty of Thanksgiving for the Benefits I have received, that I had need fear sharing *Hezekiah's* Fate, who because he was lifted up by, and not thankful enough for, the great Things God had done for him, was given up a Prey to the Pride of his own Heart.

I need, therefore, and beg your most importunate Petitions at the Throne of Grace, that no such Evil may befall me--that the
more

more God exalts me the more I may debase myself—and that after I have preached to others, I myself may not be cast away.

And now, Brethren, into God's Hands I commend your Spirits, who, I trust, through his infinite Mercies in Christ Jesus, will preserve you blameless, till his second Coming to judge the World.

Excuse my detaining you so long, 'tis the last Time I shall speak to you perhaps; my Heart is full, and out of the Abundance of it, I could continue my Discourse till Midnight—but I must away to your new World—may God give you new Hearts, and enable you to put in Practice what you have heard from Time to Time, to be your Duty, and I need not wish you any Thing better. For then God will so bless you, that *you will build you Cities to dwell in; then will you sow your Lands and plant Vineyards, which will yield you Fruits of Increase, Psal. cvii. 36, 37. Then your Oxen shall be strong to labour, there shall be no leading into Captivity, and no complaining in your Streets; then shall your Sons grow up as the young Plants, and your Daughters be as the polished Corners of the Temple: Then shall your Garners be full and plenteous with all Manner of Store, and your Sheep bring forth Thousands, and Ten Thousands in your Streets, Psal. cxliv.* In short, then shall the Lord be your God; and as surely as he has now brought

us to this Haven, where we would be, so surely after we have past through the Storms and Tempests of this troublesome World, will he bring us to the Haven of eternal Rest, where we shall have nothing to do, but to praise him for ever for his Goodness, and declare, in never ceasing Songs of Praise, the Wonders he has done for us, and all the other Sons of Men.

To which blessed Rest, God of his infinite Mercy bring us all through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with the Father and the Holy Ghost be all Honour and Glory, Might, Majesty, and Dominion now, henceforth, and for evermore. Amen, Amen.



2 JY 61

